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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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11/28/2001

Hiroyuki Kurase

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EXAMINER

AGGARWAL, YOGESH K

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2615

DATE MAILED: 03/03/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/994,747	KURASE, HIROYUKI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Yogesh K. Aggarwal	2615	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 November 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 4 and 9-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 4,9-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 16 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 11/22/2005 has been entered.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments filed 11/22/2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Examiner's response:

3. Applicant argues that Habuto does not teach the newly added limitation "deletion of music is performed in an image capturing sequence". The Examiner respectfully disagrees. As explained in the previous office action Examiner is reading a picture taking operation as a two-step process, namely start of an image capture and then saving the image in a recording medium. In Habuto, when the user tries to capture an image of the subject, the digital still camera 10 displays under the control of the MPU 19, on the display unit 18, a message such as "no more images can be captured" as shown in the display screen D2 (col. 12 lines 20-24). Therefore the first step of a picture taking operation process, namely start of an image capture, is taking place. In subsequent steps (D3-D7), Habuto teaches erasing the voice files to make space for taking more images. After erasing, the camera is ready to capture more images. Thus the newly added

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limitation of “deletion of music is performed in an image capturing sequence” is being performed before the second step of saving the image in a recording medium i.e. during an image sequence. Therefore Habuto broadly teaches the step of “deletion of music is performed in an image capturing sequence”.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 4, 9, 10 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ejima et al. (US PG-PUB # 2002/0027602) in view of Habuto et al. (US Patent # 6,810,441).

[Claim 4]

Ejima et al. teaches a camera (figure 6) with audio reproduction function (Paragraph 60), comprising an image pick-up device (20) which converts an optical image into an electrical signal (Paragraph 54); an image-capturing instructing device (figure 1, element 10) which instructs the start of a picture taking operation with the image pick-up device (Paragraph 44), a signal processing device (31) which processes the electrical signal obtained by the image pick-up device to convert it into the image data (Paragraph 55), a recording device (24) which records the image data obtained by the signal processing device on a recording medium (Paragraph 56), a reproduction processing device (39) which reproduces an audio file recorded on the recording medium (Paragraph 60), an audio output device (5) which outputs the audio reproduced by the

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reproduction processing device audibly (Paragraph 116), an instruction input device (7) which instructs whether the deletion of audio file is permitted or not (Paragraphs 131-133).

Ejima et al. teaches a method of deleting an audio file (represented by the sound icon 63 in figure 10) employing an apparatus (figure 6) having a function of reproducing the audio file to be output as audio (Paragraphs 115-116), comprising reproducing the audio file selected as a deletion object to allow an operator to confirm whether or not a deletion object is correct (Paragraphs 131-133, 140-142, figures 10, 11, 13) but fails to teach a device which detects an empty capacity of the recording medium and determines an estimated recording data amount of image acquired by an image-capturing operation using the image pick-up device and a control device which controls selective deleting of an audio file from said recording medium, wherein when the empty capacity of the recording medium is less than the estimated recording amount; said control device controls selective deleting by controlling the deleting of the candidate deletion object upon determining that an operator is proceeding with a previously-initiated picture taking operation.

However Habuto et al. teaches a MPU 19 (col. 9 lines 64-64, figure 4), which detects an empty capacity of the recording medium and determines an estimated recording data amount of image acquired by an image-capturing operation using the image pick-up device (col. 12 lines 9-29). Habuto et al. further teaches selective deleting of an audio file from said recording medium 30 when the empty capacity is less than the estimated recording data amount (col. 12 line 30-col. 13 line 19, figure 8) in order to increase the recording capacity by erasing unnecessary data belonging to audio or voice category. Habuto also teaches that not only all audio (non-conforming) files can be deleted but also any one of the audio or voice file can be deleted by

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displaying the size of the file to be erased (col. 9 lines 11-21). Examiner is reading a picture taking operation as a two-step process, namely start of an image capture and then saving the image in a recording medium. In Habuto, when the user tries to capture an image of the subject, the digital still camera 10 displays under the control of the MPU 19, on the display unit 18, a message such as “no more images can be captured” as shown in the display screen D2 (col. 12 lines 20-24). Therefore the first step of a picture taking operation process, namely start of an image capture, is taking place. Thus the newly added limitation of ‘deleting the audio file upon determining that an operator is proceeding with a previously-initiated picture taking operation’ is being read. [‘proceeding with a previously-initiated picture taking operation’ is a very broad term which includes start of an image capture operation which cannot be completed because the image cannot be saved as the recording medium is full as taught in the reference]. In subsequent steps (D3-D7), Habuto teaches erasing the voice files to make space for taking more images. After erasing, the camera is ready to capture more images. Thus the newly added limitation of “deletion of music is performed in an image capturing sequence” is being performed before the second step of saving the image in a recording medium i.e. during an image sequence. Therefore Habuto broadly teaches the step of “deletion of music is performed in an image capturing sequence”.

Therefore taking the combined teachings of Ejima and Habuto, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to have been motivated to have a device which detects an empty capacity of the recording medium; a device which grasps an estimated recording data amount of image acquired by an image-capturing operation using the image pick-up device and controls selective deleting of an audio file from said recording medium

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wherein when the empty capacity of the recording medium is less than the estimated recording amount, said control device controls selective deleting by controlling said deletes the candidate deletion object upon determining that an operator is proceeding with a previously-initiated picture taking operation wherein deletion of music is performed in an image capturing sequence in order to increase the recording capacity for taking the image by erasing unnecessary data belonging to audio or voice category as taught in Habuto (col. 13 lines 17-19).

[Claims 9 and 10]

Habuto teaches that after the display unit 18 displays a message such as “no more images can be captured” on the display screen D2 (col. 12 lines 20-24), only the first step of a picture taking operation, namely start of an image capture, as defined in claim 4 has taken place. Therefore a previously initiated picture taking operation is not completed or in other words it has stopped half way [as defined above]. Habuto further teaches that the user can choose different categories e.g. “erase data in another category” which has audio and voice files (D5 and D6) that the user can deselect by saying “no” (col. 12 lines 30-67) and therefore prevents deletion of a candidate deletion object or select any different file for deletion.

[Claim 13]

Habuto teaches that the image cannot be captured (captured or saved) because the memory is full, so an audio file is deleted before capturing an image.

6. Claims 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ejima et al. (US PG-PUB # 2002/0027602), Habuto et al. (US Patent # 6,810,441) and further in view of Yamaoka (US Patent # 5,130,812).

[Claims 11 and 12]

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Ejima in view of Habuto fails to teach wherein said image-capturing instructing device is a shutter button, when it is released the shutter button to indicate that the candidate deletion object should not be deleted.

However Yamaoka teaches that when a shutter button is half depressed, an audio file is erased so that if a user does not like a particular file a new audio file can be recorded (col. 19 lines 31-42). It is also noted that if the shutter is not depressed or released the audio file would not be deleted.

Therefore taking the combined teachings of Ejima, Habuto and Yamaoka, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to have been motivated to have an image-capturing instructing device with a shutter button when it is released the shutter button to indicate that the candidate deletion object should not be deleted so that if a user does not like a particular file a new audio file can be recorded by deleting the previous file.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claim 16 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The prior art fails to teach wherein when the shutter is at a location half depressed, if an empty area of the recording medium is not enough, a music file that is a deletion object is reproduced, and when the shutter button is at a location fully depressed without interruption, the music file is deleted, and the image-capturing operation is performed and the captured image is recorded, and when the shutter button is restored and is not depressed after the reproduction of the music file, deletion of the music file is not performed.

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Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Yogesh K. Aggarwal whose telephone number is (571) 272-7360. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:00AM-5:30PM.

8. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Ometz can be reached on (571)-272-7593. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

9. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

YKA
February 28, 2006

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Ometz', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

DAVID OMETZ
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER